



Pilot fire triggers state of emergency

By ANNE MILLERBERND

2016-08-09 11:54:32



San Bernardino County officials declared a state of emergency Tuesday, Aug. 9, as a wildfire in the local mountains continues to tear through brush.

County spokesman David Wert confirmed via email late Tuesday morning that the county issued a local state of emergency to qualify for state assistance "and perhaps eventually federal assistance."

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency has authorized the use of federal funds to help fight the fire.

The fire at the source of the declaration is burning [nearly 7,000 acres in the San Bernardino Mountains](#) near Silverwood Lake southeast of Hesperia.

Board declares local emergency in response to [#PilotFire](#)

— SBCounty (@SBCounty) [August 9, 2016](#)

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By [Jose Quintero](#)[Print Page](#)

August 09, 2016 7:20PM

Evacuated Summit Valley resident praises responding firefighters

SUMMIT VALLEY — As Summit Valley resident Tom Flury held a shovel, he watched firefighters perform cleanup work on his property that is now charred and blackened. He praised the fire crews for their efforts in keeping the Pilot Fire from damaging any of his structures.

Flury and his father, Rudy Terrazas, told the Daily Press the firefighters did a phenomenal job as the pair watched a crew continue to work Tuesday afternoon.

"I can't tell you enough about the amazing job they did," Flury said. "It was incredible because the fire came up to three sides of the house, then the jet came in and dumped on top of the house probably five to six times."

The brightly-colored retardant blanketed the family's home, surrounding property and vehicles.

"The house is now pink because of its new paint job. The cars got new paint jobs. But most importantly everybody is safe," he said.

Flury was driving home when the fire started Sunday afternoon. Not long after he arrived — as the blaze started to creep toward his home — Flury and the rest of his family were told to evacuate.

"Driving home we saw a little bit of smoke coming in and said, 'Uh oh,'" Flury said. "By the time we got home the firefighters had said the fire had spread to almost 25 to 30 acres within an hour. Then it just got out of control. We were shocked the fire came at us the way it did. It looked like the fire was pushing east, then the winds seemed to change and next thing we know we are being evacuated."

Flury's family has owned their parcels located on Highway 173 since 1981; fires have never threatened them before.

"This is as close as any fire has gotten," Flury said. "These beautiful hills are now burnt. This scenery is why we moved here. It's pretty disappointing. At one time, we thought the side of the house was on fire. It got real bad for a minute when they had the jet drop (retardant) right on top of our house. We had to back off to the command post they had set up. We just sat out for a bit while they got the fire back under control."

San Bernardino County Fire Department Chief Mark Hartwig said he was pleased to see the outcome in Summit Valley as he stood along Highway 173 Tuesday afternoon.

Hartwig attributed the fire crews being able to save the structures to the resident's landscaping efforts.

"If you have the proper brush clearance that we ask for, at least 100 feet from homes, you make your home defensible," Hartwig said. "I've stopped at all the homes along here on Highway 173 and haven't seen one house that didn't really set themselves up for success. As good a job as the firefighters did, the homeowners in this area put them in a position to get there in the first place. It all starts with defensible space. You show me a home that was saved, I'll show you a home that was defensible."

Jose Quintero may be reached at 760-955-5332 or JQuintero@DesertDispatch.com. Follow him on Twitter at @DD_JQuintero.



Summit Valley resident Tom Flury, right, and Rudy Terrazas watch a San Bernardino County bulldozer and fire crew mop up the smoldering remains left behind from the Pilot Fire on his property. Flury said flames came up to three sides of his house on Monday. James Quigg, Daily Press

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160809/NEWS/160809716>

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

Red Cross shelter in Oak Hills ready to help Pilot fire evacuees

By Jim Steinberg, The Sun

Tuesday, August 9, 2016

Strong winds are bending the signs pointing the way to the Red Cross emergency shelter set up inside Hesperia's Oak Hills High School Tuesday afternoon for Pilot fire evacuees.

Black pillows of smoke can be seen coming off the mountains and merging within a larger gray and brown layer that appears to drift for many miles north of here.

Four Red Cross volunteers are working inside the school's empty gymnasium.

Dr. Romulo Tabo, 76, a semi-retired physician from Loma Linda, showed up to the emergency center see if he could help.

So did an off-duty registered nurse at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, the county's Colton-based hospital, but he declined to give his name.

But there were no refugees from the Pilot fire here Tuesday afternoon.

"Two people came in yesterday," said Brenda Bridges, a Red Cross shelter associate said.

They stayed a few hours and left.

A family of eight stopped by earlier Tuesday and was expected to spend the night at the school's gym tonight, Bridges said.

The family's home was in the mandatory evacuation area, she said.

The high school gym is the second location for this High Desert shelter.

The first, set up Sunday, was at Rancho Middle School, but that location fell inside the mandatory evacuation zone. The shelter then moved to its current location, Bridges said.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160809/red-cross-shelter-in-oak-hills-ready-to-help-pilot-fire-evacuees>

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By Daily Press Editorial Board

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August 09, 2016 10:54AM

Our view: Pilot Fire reminds us desert at risk, too

The Pilot Fire that started Sunday afternoon near Silverwood Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains provided a very timely reminder that even parts of the High Desert are not immune from wildfires.

Anyone who has lived here for any length of time recalls other wildfires that have burned in the desert.

The North Fire that started in the Cajon Pass on July 17, 2015 burned cars on Interstate 15 before moving north into the Oak Hills and Baldy Mesa communities, where it burned a few homes, as well as more cars and other property.

The Old Fire on Oct. 25, 2003 started near Highway 18 in the San Bernardino Mountains and burned north all the way to Hesperia, forcing residents on the mesa to evacuate and covering the southeast part of the city in thick smoke and ash. For a while, it was feared it could burn all the way to Main Street.

Fanned by Santa Ana winds, the Old Fire burned more than 91,000 acres, destroyed 993 homes and resulted in six deaths.

Longtime Hesperia residents will never forget two fires in the city that merged into one on June 14, 1979. Still called the worst fire in Victor Valley history, it consumed 1,600 acres in Hesperia, destroyed 17 homes and resulted in one death. The blaze burned some areas north of Main Street, though it was largely contained at Main Street.

So though the brush in many of our communities may not look like much, it can burn quickly and spread fire rapidly. That's why it is so important for residents to maintain good brush clearance around their homes and to ensure you have a good defensible space.

It's always good to keep your important documents and pictures together somewhere you can easily find them in case you have to leave quickly, and carriers for pets certainly come in handy anytime you might have to evacuate.

But the best reminder is that your life is worth much more than any possessions or property you have to leave behind. If firefighters or Sheriff's deputies tell you to leave, do so immediately and don't stay behind to try to save your home. Let the firefighters handle that.

As we've seen with the Pilot Fire and numerous others, the men and women who fight wildfires do a tremendous job and deserve our thanks for putting their lives on the line to save our homes and property.

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160809/OPINION/160809742>

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

San Bernardino County supervisors poised to revisit rave issue in Devore

By Joe Nelson, The Sun

Tuesday, August 9, 2016



San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos said Tuesday he wants the board to revisit the issue of raves at the county-owned San Manuel Amphitheater in Devore, and is even considering a moratorium on the events.

Ramos' statements came after Supervisor Janice Rutherford, during Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting, said she could not bring a new proposal before the board because her initial [proposal died due to lack of board quorum](#) in June.

Rutherford spoke about the issue Tuesday in the wake of [three deaths](#) that occurred at the Hard Summer Music Festival at the Auto Club Speedway in Fontana July 30-31. At least six people have died at Hard Summer Music Festival events since 2013.

"I obviously don't think the county should have these events at a county-owned facility anymore," said Rutherford. "But I can't bring it up for reconsideration. One of my colleagues will have to bring it up for consideration."

So, Ramos has stepped up to the plate.

"We are going to revisit it. We are in favor of bringing that item back to the board," Ramos said Tuesday.

Like Rutherford, Ramos said the matter can be taken up after the next weekendlong Nocturnal Wonderland festival scheduled for Labor Day weekend. It is the last electronic dance show that promoter Live Nation can hold at the amphitheater under its [three-year contract](#) with the county approved by the board in January 2013.

In the past three years, more than 100, possibly hundreds, of residents from Devore and as far away as Crestline have complained about excessive noise, traffic and loitering generated by the raves, according to Rutherford.

Live Nation hosts Nocturnal Wonderland and its sister events, including Beyond Wonderland, at San Manuel. Under its contract with the county, Live Nation can host four raves annually at the amphitheater, the largest open air venue in the contiguous U.S.

Until the county is in a position to renegotiate, it is hoping Live Nation adequately addresses resident complaints about the noise, traffic, loitering and rampant drug use that the raves attract.

Rutherford said she does not know what measures Live Nation will take to address the complaints.

"We will have to wait and see what they actually do in September and whether that makes a difference," said Rutherford, adding that she is considering bringing to the table again a proposal to have the events end at 11 p.m. instead of 2 a.m., as the original contract mandated before it was amended per Live Nation's request.

Since 2013, two rave attendees at the San Manuel Amphitheater died of drug overdoses. Arrel Cochon, 22, of Hollywood died after attending the inaugural Nocturnal Wonderland event in 2013, and John Hoang Dinh Vo, 22, of San Diego, died after attending Beyond Wonderland event in March of last year.

Live Nation spokesman Victor Trevino did not respond to a telephone call and an e-mail Tuesday seeking comment.

Rutherford's push to end the county contract with Live Nation in June failed due to lack of quorum. Supervisors Ramos and Josie Gonzales were absent, and Supervisor Curt Hagman was against terminating the Live Nation contract, saying revenue generated from the raves supports improvements at other county parks.

Devore residents who have led the charge in pushing the county to ban raves at the amphitheater voiced their concerns Tuesday.

"Money for parks is a poor excuse for promoting drug use and endangering lives," said Valerie Henry.

Resident Kim Bridgewater said the higher the body count gets, the more liability it is for the county.

"It doesn't make sense to put ourselves in such a big liability," Bridgewater said.

Ramos said a rave task force approved at the June board meeting should be formed and ready to go to work in September.

"We'll look at all the options in front of us, which could include a moratorium on any future negotiations on any contracts coming forward to the county," Ramos said.

Until then, Ramos said the county will be keeping a watchful eye on the outcome of Nocturnal Wonderland in September.

"We're going to be monitoring it real close," he said.

Rutherford said it is not an option for such events to be so neighbor unfriendly.

"If the county is going to continue to host these events, there cannot be negative impacts on the people who live in the neighboring community," she said. "And obviously, none of us want any concertgoers to die at these events."

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160809/san-bernardino-county-supervisors-poised-to-revisit-rave-issue-in-devore>

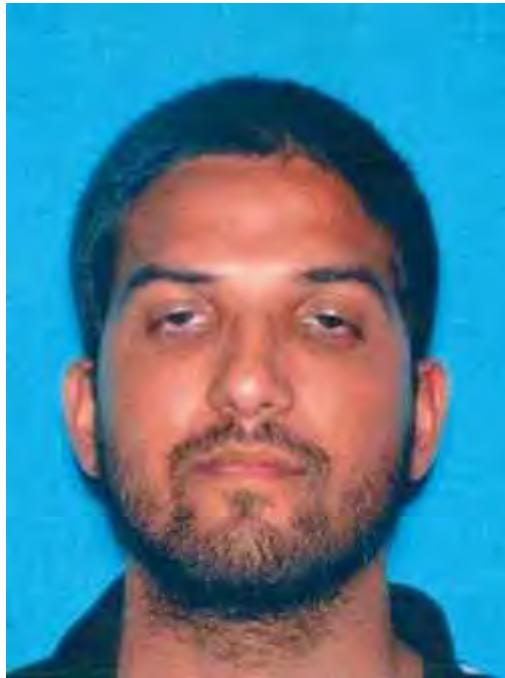
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San Bernardino shooter's life insurance seized by court

By Richard K. De Atley, *The Press-Enterprise*

Tuesday, August 9, 2016



The \$275,000 in life insurance policies taken out by San Bernardino terrorist Syed Rizwan Farook naming his mother as beneficiary are subject to government seizure, a federal judge has ruled.

Instead of going to Rafia Farook, the money has been deposited with the court clerk, where it will be held until further orders.

The insurance company that had separately challenged payout of the claims deposited the money in June, the court document said.

The forfeiture can be disputed with a claim filed within 35 to 60 days, depending on the type of notice received about the order, U.S. District Judge Jesus G. Bernal ruled on Aug. 5.

In June, Minnesota Life Insurance alleged in a federal lawsuit that Rafia Farook knew of her son's planned terrorist attack and should not be entitled to the \$275,000 in benefits. She was the prime beneficiary for the two policies.

Bernal's ruling was not on the Minnesota Life lawsuit, but on a separate filing in May by the government to seize the assets of the policies.

The Los Angeles U.S. Attorney's Office's civil asset forfeiture lawsuit said the government wanted to use the insurance money for the surviving victims of the attack and the family members of those who died.

The judge's order in the forfeiture case did not address the insurance company's lawsuit claim that Rafia Farook knew of the attack.

She lived in the Redlands apartment with her 28-year-old son, a San Bernardino County health inspector, and his wife, fellow terrorist Tashfeen Malik, at the time of the Dec. 2 attack at the Inland Regional Center that killed 14 and wounded 22. The couple later died in a shootout with law enforcement on the same day.

During a search of Farook's and Malik's Redlands apartment following the shootings, FBI agents seized pipe bombs, bomb-making materials and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

"Minnesota Life is informed and believes that Ms. Farook had material knowledge of, and/or participated in, the planning of the terrorist attack executed by the insured," according to the six-page lawsuit, which named Rafia Farook, Syed Rizwan Farook's sister Saira Khan, and the U.S. government as defendants. Khan was named as contingent beneficiary on the policies.

Rafia Farook has not been charged during the course of the FBI's ongoing investigation into the attack. The government declined to comment at the time the lawsuit was filed.

Clad in black tactical gear and armed with assault rifles, Syed Rizwan Farook and Malik entered the IRC conference center about 11 a.m. on the day of the attack and opened fire.

Thirteen of the 14 people killed and most of the wounded were Farook's co-workers at the county's environmental health services division, who were attending a training seminar the morning of the shooting.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160809/san-bernardino-shooters-life-insurance-seized-by-court>

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Air pollution kills more people in the Inland Empire than anywhere else in the US, researchers say

Region leads the nation in air pollution deaths, new study shows

By David Danelski, *The Press-Enterprise*

Wednesday, August 10, 2016



As Southern California continues to struggle through this summer's unrelenting smog, a study released Wednesday, Aug. 10, gives a stark reminder of why air quality matters.

Researchers believe that hundreds of people die each year because of Southern California's poor air quality. Pollution levels routinely exceed the levels deemed safe by health professionals.

In the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario metropolitan area, about 808 people are estimated to die each year because of the bad air.

This makes the Inland area's air quality the deadliest in the nation, followed by the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale area, where 619 deaths a year are believed caused by air pollution, researchers found.

The Santa Ana-Irvine area had 64 estimated deaths from air pollution.

- Related: [Check the air quality in your area](#)

The study was conducted by the American Thoracic Society, a group of health-care professionals that focuses on understanding pulmonary diseases, critical illnesses and sleep-related breathing disorders, and New York University's Marron Institute of Urban Management.

Nationally, the deaths were estimated at 9,330 a year, which is comparable to the number of lives lost annually to drunken driving.

The study's lead author, Kevin Cromer, a professor at the NYU institute, said by telephone that he hopes the results will raise public awareness and better inform policy makers.

"We are just providing previously unavailable information that can help air quality managers and cities make more meaningful decisions," said Cromer, who has expertise in population health and environmental medicine.

The study was based on air pollution data for both fine particle and ozone levels in U.S. metropolitan areas recorded in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

The numbers of deaths and illnesses were then estimated through computer analysis that took into account epidemiological studies linking various health effects to air pollution exposure.

The researchers noted that they believe their results are conservative. They did not count deaths from cancers that take decades to develop or deaths from the exacerbation of other chronic illnesses such as diabetes.

Cromer and his colleagues also created a website, www.HealthoftheAir.org, that allows users to input zip codes to learn the estimated numbers of deaths and illness in regions throughout the nation.

Dr. Ahmet Baydur, a pulmonary expert and professor of clinical medicine at the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine, said the people most at risk are those whose lungs already are damaged by smoking and people with emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and severe asthma.

Of particular concern are people who need to treat themselves with oxygen from portable oxygen tanks, he said.

Air pollution causes inflammation that creates mucus and swelling that blocks internal air passageways, he said. Inflammation from air pollution also can trigger heart attacks, Baydur said.

In addition to deaths, the study estimated the number of acute illnesses attributable to air pollution. This was done by tallying the expected number of heart attacks, cardiac and respiratory hospitalizations, and emergency room visits.

In the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario area, these illnesses were estimated at 1,416 a year, while the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale area had an estimated 1,661 such illnesses.

The study further estimated the number of times people called in sick, missed school or otherwise had to curtail their activities because of air pollution. In the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale area, this number exceeded 2 million, while the Inland area had 1.3 million such days.

The study was released as Southern California's ocean-to-mountains air basin is weathering a tough smog season. As of Aug. 8, the region had exceeded the federal health standard for lung-irritating ozone during at least 90 days.

That's 24 more unhealthful days than last year, with the worst pollution in the Crestline, Redlands and San Bernardino areas.

Baydur, said research has shown the cost of reducing air pollution is much less than the cost for health care and lost productivity associated with bad air.

He is a member of the American Thoracic Society, which recommends a more protective ozone standard of 60 parts per billion.

"Anything we can do to reduce particle and gaseous air pollutants will be extremely helpful in the long run," Baydur said. "An estimated 9,000 deaths a year is quite significant."

Officials with the South Coast Air Quality Management District welcomed the study.

Studies such as this one help illustrate the important public health impacts of air pollution," said Jo Kay Ghosh, the air district's health effects officer.

"The good news is that air pollution levels are going down here in Southern California, but we clearly need to continue our efforts to adopt policies and programs that will help us to achieve clean air here in the region," Ghosh said in a statement.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/environment-and-nature/20160810/air-pollution-kills-more-people-in-the-inland-empire-than-anywhere-else-in-the-us-researchers-say>

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Inland Valley Daily Bulletin (<http://www.dailypaper.com>)

Upheaval in Upland: Former manager gets payout, mayor to retire

By David Allen, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Tuesday, August 9, 2016



If Uplanders felt a series of mild jolts Monday evening as they went about their business, those might have been the municipal government version of earthquakes. It was an eventful City Council meeting even by Upland standards.

At 7:32 p.m., an old hand came out of retirement to become the temporary city manager.

Around 9:30 p.m., the recently fired city manager was given an eye-popping severance package.

And at 9:51 p.m., the mayor announced his retirement.

For safety, I should have watched the meeting while standing in a doorway, or hiding under a table.

Apparently there was a tremor Monday morning too, shortly after 8 a.m., when [the fire chief was placed on administrative leave](#), probably the first step in canning him. Can Upland get along without a fire chief right now? It feels like the city is in flames.

Let's take the evening's upsets in chronological order.

First, Marty Thouvenell saddled up to become interim city manager. Thouvenell spent 33 years with the Police Department before retiring in 2005. He was city manager once before, from 1995 to 1996, after the previous manager was fired.

Twenty years later, he's back in the executive suite for a tenure expected to last six months.

"You can trust him because he loves Upland," said Dave Stevens, who was on the council that appointed him manager in 1995.

Thouvenell will be making \$75 an hour, or up to \$72,000 over a half-year tenure. By city manager standards, that's modest, and as a retiree he doesn't need city-paid medical benefits.

[My suggestion that Thouvenell be paid \\$1](#) due to his \$154,000 pension had as much effect as most of my suggestions.

"A buck?" Thouvenell joked to me before the meeting started. "Tell you what, we'll go to lunch next week and you can try buying with a dollar."

Hey, I didn't say they shouldn't give him expenses.

Meanwhile, the council [fired its city manager, Rod Butler](#), on July 27, as you'll recall. Lost headline possibility: "Upland dismisses Butler."

We're not entirely clear on why Butler was removed. Maybe someone [sprayed him with an orange dot](#). (Sorry, Upland in-joke.) But it seems as though the easygoing manager wasn't willing to rock the boat as hard as some council members would have liked.

What we do know is that Butler is [due an envious severance](#). Based on his contract, he gets nine months of pay and benefits. This amounts to almost \$207,000.

Strangely, his nine months of pay is more than his annual salary for 12 months, which was \$189,628, but that's because he'll get his health plan cost, deferred compensation, auto allowance and CalPERS employer contribution to his retirement, all in cash.

The result is he'll be paid almost \$23,000 per month through May 2017, minus taxes, for doing nothing. Who says nice guys finish last? He'll be the best-paid Butler around. He can even hire his own butler.

I imagine some of his windfall will go toward counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder caused by working for the Upland City Council, but still.

Memo to Upland: Please hire me! And then fire me! Otherwise I'll never be able to retire.

Mayor Ray Musser had some news that he saved until the meeting's end: [He won't run for a new term in November](#).

He read a statement about how much he had enjoyed serving the city, through 18 years on the council, the last five as mayor, but said he wanted to spend more time with his family. When he was done, resident Jim Thomas called out, "Thank you, Ray!" and the remaining audience of about two dozen broke into applause.

"A month ago, I was going to do it," Musser, who'll turn 81 next month, said afterward. "I still have energy. I'm still sharp. I'm the same age as the pope. Or you look at Vin Scully."

But balanced against his desire to serve and his concern for leaving during a management breakup, Musser has some health issues, and his speech is noticeably slurred compared to a few years ago. His wife and children were against his running again. He decided last week to hang it up.

He gave me a warm handshake and said, "You were always fair to me," which suddenly made me wonder if he's losing it after all.

Thouvenell hopes to make an impact in his short tenure and Musser wants to do the same in the few weeks he has left. "It frees you up," he said of not facing voters again.

Musser said the Fire Department needs to cut costs dramatically, even more than [the 2014 merger with Montclair](#) provided.

Disbanding the department and contracting with [Cal Fire](#) is a possibility, the mayor said.

Upland, here's your early warning system: Prepare for more seismic activity.

David Allen writes Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, more reason to hang on tight. Contact dallen@scng.com or 909-483-9339, visit [insidesocal.com/davidallen](#), like [davidallencolumnist](#) on Facebook and follow [@davidallen909](#) on Twitter.

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Fired Upland city manager makes thousands for not working

City manager: Council OKs \$200K severance package for fired official, hires interim for up to \$72K

By Liset Márquez, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Tuesday, August 9, 2016



UPLAND >> The city will pay fired city manager [Rod Butler](#) nearly \$23,000 a month — or \$206,997 over a nine-month period — not to show up to work.

It will pay much less for the man officially hired Monday to replace him on an interim basis while the City Council searches for new leadership. [Martin Thouvenell](#), an Upland former police and fire chief, has agreed to help guide the city out of financial straits for \$75 an hour, or up to \$72,000 for 960 hours.

Despite the financial consequences, reaction in council chambers was positive with several residents speaking out in favor of the decision to bring in Thouvenell.

After a unanimous decision from the council, the interim city manager then took his seat on the dais and helped conduct the rest of the meeting.

“My primary focus starting (Tuesday) will be developing a budget that will get us through some of the issues that I see existing today, down the road and years to come,” he told the council.

On July 27, the Upland City Council terminated Butler, effective Aug. 29. Thouvenell was appointed to replace Butler while a permanent leader was found.

Thouvenell said he’s not only going to be relying on a number of influential people to help him through this process but intends to assemble a committee and “come up with a comprehensive bailout of the budget that will be presented to the council in the next few months.”

Ideally, that plan would be ready for council review in two months, he later said.

Thouvenell also told the council he hopes city leaders — who have had a history of discord and split votes — will be able to put aside their personal differences and work on the budget. As of Monday night, Thouvenell said he had already met individually with all council members and was very encouraged by their interest for the city.

“I know you’ll all do a good job, and I really look forward to working with you,” he told council members.

According to the staff report, Thouvenell will be paid 15 percent less of Butler’s hourly rate, and will not receive any benefits.

Thouvenell has the fifth-highest paid pension in the city, receiving \$154,167 annually, according to [2015 figures provided by Transparent California](#).

If a city manager is selected within six months, the city briefly could wind up paying for two city manager salaries simultaneously: the fired director's salary and the permanent replacement. All this for a city that has grappled with financial issues in the past several years: In its 2016-2017 budget, Upland has a slim \$220,000 surplus.

In a confusing moment during Monday's meeting, some in attendance prematurely erupted in cheers when they thought the council had voted to approve Thouvenell's contract. The council had simply voted to move the vote to the top of the agenda so the council could take public comments and cast its vote.

Resident and Grove Theater owner Bill Kinison said it is rare for him to attend meetings, but the hiring of a city manager is a big decision he had to personally witness.

Kinison has known Thouvenell for 25 years — they met when he opened the theater.

"I've known him to be a man of passion, a man of wisdom and I personally wish we would have hired him a long time ago," Kinison said. "I think he will be a fantastic city manager."

But the praise didn't end there. One resident, who said Thouvenell once wrote her a ticket when he was a police officer, came out to voice her support for the interim city manager.

Dave Stevens, a former city councilman, also joined the chorus of supporters.

"It was brilliant that you hired Marty. As a matter of fact, it is huge. Really huge," he said.

Stevens said residents should not be skeptical of Thouvenell's hiring.

"Marty is not a member of the old guard. ... He took the old guard down. His investigation of the old guard brought the FBI in and straightened things out," he said, referring to the [2010 incident that led to a City Hall housecleaning](#).

In 1995, the city was not only facing a recession but also experiencing financial instability when it hired Thouvenell as the police chief. The city manager was fired and the council selected Thouvenell to fill both positions. Stevens said he saved Upland \$500,000 a year taking on the dual roles. While city manager, Thouvenell reorganized several of the departments, reducing the number of department heads by almost half, he said.

"Before long, because of the things he did, we had some reserves," Stevens said.

One resident did urge the council to say why Butler was terminated last month in a 3-2 vote. City Attorney Richard Adams explained it was a personnel matter, and the details could not be released.

The council voted 4-1, with Councilman Glenn Bozar opposed, to approve Butler's severance package, which will cover his salary, medical benefits and automobile allowance. The agreement approved Monday was just a few days shy of what would have been his two-year anniversary with the city. He was hired Aug. 11, 2014.

In addition, the council still owes Butler for any unused vacation time. The 10-page agreement stipulates that Butler waives his right to file any lawsuits against the city.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article has been edited to correct the spelling of Bill Kinison and clarify how many city manager salaries the city could be funding simultaneously.

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By [Shea Johnson](#)

[Print Page](#)

August 09, 2016 8:05PM

After property sold to marijuana proprietor, rubber product company migrating to SCLA

ADELANTO — After roughly a decade in the city's industrial park, DeVoll Rubber Products, Inc. will be moving by the month's end to an old hangar at Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, according to owner John DeVoll.

It wasn't a planned migration, to which both DeVoll and the company's old landlord can attest, but simply the result of a tenacious medical marijuana proprietor making an offer that couldn't be refused.

Adelanto-based property owner Ron Herndon said his father recently sold for double the market value the land where DeVoll had operated on Raccoon Avenue, which has been permitted for commercial pot activities since November, leaving the company with 60 days to scramble to seek out a new location.

"It wasn't on the market, I was just bombarded with calls," Herndon said about the land the family has possessed since the early 1980s. Inquiries started pretty much immediately after the city's pot ordinance passed.

Told to name a price, he did, and even though a few deals fell through, one offer was ultimately "something we couldn't turn down."

"It's a race now," DeVoll said Thursday, about a month after being notified of the sale. "We're in survival mode and panic mode, trying to get everything accomplished."

By "everything," DeVoll is referring to the commercial equipment, machinery and materials that must be moved without disrupting the product flow to existing customers.

"It was unfortunate, but that's just kind of the way business goes," Herndon said, "and the new owners wanted it as fast as possible."

The buy-out underscores the transformative real estate market in the city's industrial zone after marijuana cultivation was approved nearly a year ago. On Wednesday, Mayor Rich Kerr provided a glimpse of skyrocketing land values, saying that a 3,000-square-foot building in the park recently sold for an astounding \$3 million, worth only a sliver of that just a year ago.

"We had no knowledge or understanding of what these implications were," DeVoll said. "I don't think the city of Adelanto even knew what the implications were when they wrote this law."

Land booms have also been reported in Desert Hot Springs, the first city in Southern California to authorize commercial pot cultivation, as well as other cities in the Coachella Valley that have since entered the industry.

DeVoll garnered help from San Bernardino County 1st District Supervisor Robert Livingood in making connections to find the company's new SCLA home. He also lauded the city of Victorville's Economic Development Department and the airport for rallying behind the company during the "tough transition."

To be clear, he also holds no ill will against the landlord — saying they "have been great" — or the city of Adelanto, but the acknowledgment that the current climate is how it is doesn't erase the sting.

Trying to remain optimistic, however, he said he found at least one silver lining with his company's new neighbors: Boeing and General Electric.

"Wow," he remembered thinking not long ago. "We just moved into the Beverly Hills of industrial property."

Shea Johnson may be reached at 760-955-5368 or SJohnson@VVDailyPress.com. Follow him on Twitter at @DP_Shea.

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160809/NEWS/160809714>

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Inland Valley Daily Bulletin (<http://www.dailypaper.com>)

Aldi planning new store in Rancho Cucamonga, hiring fair Wednesday

By Neil Nisperos, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Tuesday, August 9, 2016



RANCHO CUCAMONGA >> Aldi supermarket, a recent Southern California entry into the competitive grocery space, plans to open a store in Rancho Cucamonga.

The store is expected to open in November at the Terra Vista Towne Center shopping center, 11070 Foothill Blvd., according to a recruitment notice and a Rancho Cucamonga planning document.

A job fair to fill the new positions is planned for 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday at the Hilton Garden Inn, 10543 Sierra Ave. in Fontana.

The company is looking for store associates. New employees can expect to start at \$13 an hour, and receive an additional \$1 an hour for work on Sundays. Raises are granted every six months.

Employees can earn up to \$21 per hour with tenure. Full-time work is 33 to 40 hours per week. Employment benefits include medical, dental, vision insurance, paid vacation and a 401(k) with matching contributions.

The new store is set to open in November according to recruitment organizers.

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URL: <http://www.dailypaper.com/business/20160809/aldi-planning-new-store-in-rancho-cucamonga-hiring-fair-wednesday>

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Bighorn sheep rescued from mud at Morongo preserve

By Leslie Shaw Hi-Desert Star | Posted: Tuesday, August 9, 2016 12:19 pm

MORONGO VALLEY — A young bighorn sheep was rescued from a mud hole in the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve's marsh area off the Mesquite Trail Monday morning.

Hikers discovered what they believed was a dead bighorn sheep and reported it to the preserve's host, Dee Zeller, Sunday evening.

The next morning, Dee Zeller and his son, Bear Zeller, walked into the preserve to check on the carcass to see if it needed to be moved from the trail. "Normally if it wasn't blocking the trail, we would leave it alone so other animals could eat it," Bear explained.

"At first we couldn't find anything, then my dad said, 'Did you hear that?' We found this bighorn sheep in a mud puddle up to his head. Only his head and a little bit of his back was above the mud. He had been there all night and was distressed."

Dee Zeller went back for a rope, which they tied around the sheep's horns. "I asked him if it would be OK to pull him by the horns and my father said it would be all right because their necks are so strong from the ramming they do," Bear said. "My dad pulled the rope and I got into the mud and pushed him out from behind."

The rescue took place about 8:30 a.m. The men left the sheep alone after getting him out of the mud and went back to check on him about an hour later.

"He was still there. He was alert but hadn't moved," Bear said. "I did check his legs when we pulled him out and they didn't seem to be broken. He just seemed a bit traumatized."

The men called the state Department of Fish and Wildlife to help the animal, but before they arrived the sheep wandered off on his own.

Bear said his father thought the sheep became stuck trying to drink water. "There is usually a lot more water; it's the lowest we've ever seen it. We've had deer coming every day into the parking lot to drink from the ceramic water dishes we put out."



Bighorn sheep rescued from mud at Morongo preserve

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve host Dee Zeller and his son Bear Zeller rescue a bighorn sheep that had become mired in a deep mud hole in the marsh area of the preserve Monday morning.

[« MAN DROWNS IN MISHAP AT POOL IN TWENTYNINE PALMS](#)[SEARCH WARRANT RESULTS IN THREE ARRESTS IN YUCCA VALLEY](#)

»

TWO MEN ARRESTED AFTER TODDLER FOUND ALONE IN JOSHUA TREE

By Z107.7 News, on August 10th, 2016

Two men were arrested Tuesday evening in Joshua Tree, accused of leaving a young child alone and then fighting with the friends of the person who reported them. According to a Sheriff's report, a neighbor called about 7:30 p.m. to report a child, estimated to be 4 or 5 years old, had been left alone at a home in the 6900 block of Hill View Road. The child was in the front yard and was crying, according to the report. During the call to the Sheriff's Department, the caller said the suspects came to her home to confront her about the phone call and started arguing with her and hitting one of her friends. After an investigation, William Catlett, 47, and Jamichael Bowie, 26, were arrested on suspicion of felony child cruelty. William Catlett was booked into the Morongo Basin Jail, with his bail set at \$100,000. Jamichael Bowie was also arrested for investigation of possession of a dirk or dagger and suspicion of domestic violence, booked at the Morongo Basin Jail, with his bail set at \$100,000.

August 10th, 2016 | Tags: [child cruelty](#), [domestic violence](#), [joshua tree](#), [morongo basin](#), [possession of a dangerous weapon](#), [san bernardino county](#) | Category: [Local News](#), [Top Story](#)

San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

How one tireless advocate protected Joshua Tree National Park: Guest commentary

By Kim Bishop

Tuesday, August 9, 2016



Growing up in Arizona and California, I spent a great deal of time in the desert from an early age. From visiting my grandmother in Rancho Mirage to weekend campouts during college at USC, I felt drawn to the colorful sunsets at night and delighted in the area's birds and animals. This love of the desert is in my blood — my childhood is full of priceless memories and stories about these lands, including the ones I learned about Minerva Hoyt, my great-great-grandmother, and her role in protecting what is now Joshua Tree National Park.

Living in Southern California in the early 1900s, Minerva Hoyt became enamored with the beauty of our desert and its unique plant life.

She also saw that this special place was threatened by people who destroyed cactus plants and Joshua trees. Progressive and charitable as she was, Minerva Hoyt dedicated herself to the cause of protecting the California Desert. She organized exhibitions of desert plants in cities across the United States and internationally. She began a persistent campaign to establish a park in the Joshua Tree area, urging then-President Franklin Roosevelt to take action.

On Aug. 10, we celebrate the 80th anniversary of when Joshua Tree was first protected as a national monument. This milestone is, for me, as much a celebration of the woman behind the desert landmark as it is the land itself. In 1936, Minerva Hoyt, after a long and tireless campaign, convinced President Franklin Roosevelt and Congress to designate Joshua Tree National Monument.

There's no better time than Joshua Tree's anniversary to remember how one tireless advocate can protect a national treasure for future generations. "Mamu," as my grandfather affectionately called Minerva, dedicated her life to the goal of protecting the desert. She was the embodiment of strength, the word "fortitude" personified, and she maintained an unrelenting passion for preserving the beauty of the desert throughout her life and her work.

This year, the best part of history repeated itself when President Obama permanently protected three new national monuments in the California desert. Sen. Dianne Feinstein championed this cause, along with community and faith leaders, local business leaders, veterans and outdoor enthusiasts. Just like Franklin Roosevelt in 1936, President Obama used the Antiquities Act to permanently protect Mojave Trails, Sand to Snow and Castle Mountains national monuments for future generations. His leadership in protecting these places gives me hope that Minerva's legacy is being carried forward.

But there's more for President Obama to do to protect our public lands, particularly in the Southwestern United States. I urge him to permanently protect other special places including Bears Ears in Utah, Gold Butte in Nevada, and the Grand Canyon Watershed in Arizona. Each of these sites is threatened by human activity in one way or another, be it toxic mining, old-growth logging or impact on important archaeological sites. All are in urgent need of protection, and all deserve to be preserved for future generations.

My memories of the desert were made possible by my great-great-grandmother — warm desert evenings looking across that infinite expanse, the sun setting over the cacti, the peaceful quiet of the rugged landscape. Next spring, I'm planning a visit to Joshua Tree National Park with my family. This is one of the last trips we'll take together before my twin sons go off to college and I'll be sharing with them the history of their great-great-great-grandmother.

That's why Minerva's legacy is so important — I want the promise of those memories and experiences for my sons, and for their children, and for theirs after that. It's up to us to take the steps to provide for that, and that begins with permanent protection of our special public lands.

Kim Bishop is the great-great-granddaughter of Minerva Hoyt. She lives in Danville, Calif.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/opinion/20160809/how-one-tireless-advocate-protected-joshua-tree-national-park-guest-commentary>

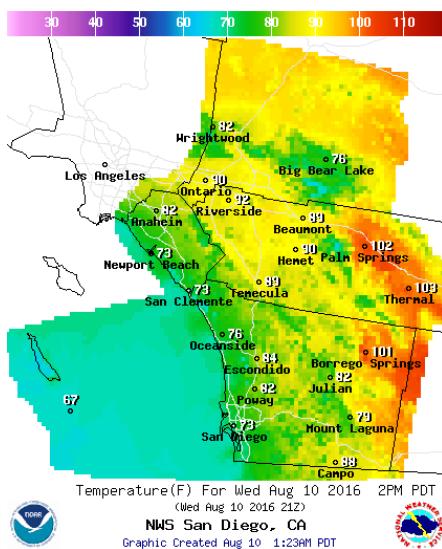
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Hoping for 100-degree temperatures? You're in luck

By ANNE MILLERBERND

2016-08-10 06:13:04



If you're a fan of 100-degree temperatures and absolutely no wind, it's your lucky...weekend.

Recently, it seems Mother Nature has been going easy on the Inland Empire. Highs for the past few days haven't reached much higher than 96 degrees.

But that's all going to change as we head into the weekend.

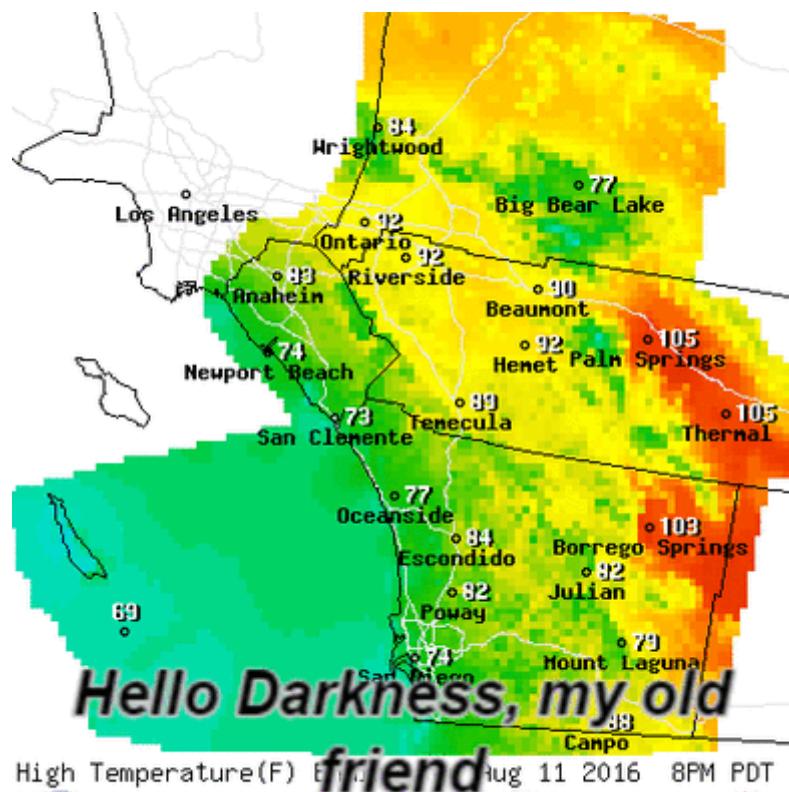
The National Weather Service puts highs in the Inland highs Wednesday, Aug. 10, between 89 and 94 with steady increases each day until Saturday, when temperatures will reach between 96 and 101.

The heat does not top off there, though. Temperatures are expected to reach as high as 105 by Monday, the weather service reports.

For what it's worth, highs in the low 90s are slightly below average for the area this time of year. Also, though, 105 is a good deal above.

The high-pressure system bringing the extra-high temperatures in will strengthen between Friday and early next week, the weather service says. Whether it will weaken later in the week still isn't completely clear.

Average highs land around 94 in August, according to the NWS. Starting in September, temperatures are likely to begin a downward climb toward fall averages.



High Temperature(F) Forecast as of Aug 11 2016 8PM PDT

[via GIPHY](#)

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LA County risk for West Nile virus 'higher than usual'

The risk of contracting West Nile virus in Los Angeles County is at a five-year high, according to vector control officials.

The number of mosquito samples testing positive for the virus in the county is three times the number at this point last year, according to Levy Sun, spokesman for the Greater L.A. County Vector Control District.

"It is shaping up to be a very active year, and we can expect people to be sick from West Nile virus," Sun says.

He adds that cases of the virus in dead birds and sentinel chickens are also up compared with last year.

"It's really hard to predict how many people, or where people will get sick," says Sun. "We just know that right now, throughout L.A. County, the risk is higher than usual."

Statewide, the number of mosquito samples testing positive for West Nile virus at this point in the year is almost double the five-year average.

Over the previous dozen years [the number of cases in California has fluctuated significantly](#), from a high of 880 in 2005 to a low of 110 in 2010.

Last year, 783 people developed West Nile virus statewide; 53 died.

Most people who become infected with West Nile don't develop symptoms, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About one in five people who are infected will develop a fever and other symptoms, including headaches, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea or rash. Most people with this type of the disease will recover completely.

Less than 1 percent of people who are infected will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis. Recovery from the severe form of the disease takes several weeks or months. About 10 percent of people who develop neurologic infection due to West Nile will die.

Experts say the best way to avoid getting West Nile virus is to wear insect repellent and long clothes outdoors, especially during dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most likely to bite.

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Fewer marijuana dispensaries in San Diego than expected

Strict regulations, other hurdles blamed; concern about illegal pot shops grows



(/staff/david-garrick/)

By [David Garrick](/staff/david-garrick/) (/staff/david-garrick/) | 2:50 p.m. Aug. 9, 2016 | Updated , 3:43 p.m.



Zach Lazarus labeled jars in March at the city of San Diego's first legal dispensary in Otay Mesa. — *John Gibbins / U-T San Diego*

SAN DIEGO — More than two years after San Diego approved legal sales of medical marijuana, the city has just eight dispensaries – far fewer than predicted – with no others even close to opening.

Medical marijuana advocates blame the relatively small number primarily on restrictive city zoning and regulations, but six dispensaries got final city approval months ago yet still haven't opened for a variety of reasons.

The struggles could mean recreational marijuana, which state voters might approve on the November ballot, could be harder to find in San Diego than in many other cities.

Whether San Diego creates a separate approval process for recreational dispensaries or allows medical dispensaries to also sell recreational marijuana, the zoning restrictions and regulations are expected to be similarly tough.

The relatively small number of dispensaries is also being blamed for the persistence of dozens of illegal or "black market" pot shops across the city.

Critics say that if there aren't enough legal dispensaries to serve an estimated 100,000 medical marijuana patients across the county, then patients will continue to rely on the illegal shops despite them having no standards for product testing or security.

City officials also call the illegal shops dangerous because they don't conform to zoning rules designed to ensure businesses selling marijuana are far away from housing, schools, parks, churches and other sensitive uses.

City regulations allow 36 dispensaries, a maximum of four in each of nine council districts.

Because of restrictive zoning and other regulations in the ordinance San Diego adopted in March 2014, medical marijuana advocates predicted only about 20 legal dispensaries would end up opening.

A year later, that number had been whittled down to somewhere between 12 and 17 because of new problems and roadblocks faced by applicants, such as being disqualified by the proximity of little-known "open space" areas that city officials designated as parks.

In one way, those predictions appear to be about right. Fourteen dispensaries have gotten final approval and a 15th appears likely to follow suit later this summer.

But in another way, those predictions were significantly off because six of the 14 approved dispensaries haven't opened many months after getting final approval.

Some have run into typical problems faced by any business, such as construction snafus, money problems or city rules regarding the striping of parking lots.

Others have faced more unusual challenges, such as key people dying, landlords getting cold feet or building associations banning dispensaries by updating codes, covenants and restrictions.

And while financial problems aren't unusual when starting a new business, some applicants have complained they ran out of money because obtaining a city permit ended up being much more expensive than they expected.

"Every one is its own story," said Jessica McElfresh, an attorney representing three of the eight dispensaries that have opened. "I think the reasons are pretty unsexy. I had hoped more dispensaries would be open by now, but this happens with these kinds of projects."

Lance Rogers, an attorney representing two of the six approved dispensaries that haven't opened, said the two situations are far different.

A dispensary approved in March 2015 for 8888 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. is the subject of ongoing litigation, with the landlord being sued for \$3.2 million because he backed out of the lease shortly after the dispensary got its initial city approval.

The landlord says breaking the lease was warranted because of city-imposed restrictions on the dispensary the applicant agreed to — without the landlord's consent — after the lease was signed.

Rogers said he's hopeful there might be a settlement that would allow the dispensary to open eventually. But he also said the litigation has been complicated by the death of the dispensary permit owner.

Another dispensary approved in December 2015 for just north of the Washington Street trolley station has been delayed because the applicant has ambitious plans, Rogers said.

"They are taking time to fully construct the building because they view this as a long-term business and want to invest a lot of money to make it a nice place," he said.

Another dispensary approved in July 2015 for 4645 DeSoto St. in eastern Pacific Beach may be taking a similar approach. McElfresh said the applicants had to demolish part of a building as part of construction.

A dispensary approved for 1028 Buenos Avenue in April might not be facing any unusual hurdles. It typically takes a few months for approved dispensaries to open because sites must undergo city inspections and employees must pass background checks. But the applicant hasn't submitted some city paperwork crucial to the process.

A dispensary approved in December 2015 just southeast of downtown in Stockton recently began background checks. The intended operator of the dispensary changed after city approval, complicating the process.

A dispensary approved in July 2015 for 8863 Balboa Ave. in Kearny Mesa faces perhaps the steepest path to opening.

The site is in an office building jointly owned by tenants, and the owners association decided to forbid dispensaries after the applicant received a city permit. Also, in an apparently unrelated development, the applicant committed suicide.

Prospects appeared to improve this spring for three additional dispensaries beyond the 14 approved, when a comprehensive update of city codes made it easier to open dispensaries within 1,000 feet of schools, parks and other sensitive uses if there is a freeway, wall or some topographical feature in between.

But only one of these three, a dispensary proposed for 3455 Camino del Rio South in Mission Valley, is being recommended for approval by city planners.

That dispensary is within 1,000 feet of Indian Hills open space park, but because of differences in elevation the dispensary meets the new city guidelines.

Two other dispensaries in Grantville — one at 4417 Rainier Ave and one at 4410 Glacier Ave — initially seemed likely to benefit from the new rules.

They are within 1,000 feet of a riparian open space area behind the Black Angus restaurant on eastern Friars Road, but Friars Road creates a separation that meets the city's new criteria.

However, they no longer meet zoning criteria for dispensaries thanks to a recent re-zoning of much of Grantville when the City Council adopted a new community plan for the area.

Because their dispensary application was already underway during the rezone, they can continue. But they must use the version of the municipal code that was in place at that time, a version that didn't include the exemption from the 1,000-foot rule if a freeway, wall or topographical feature is in between.

City planners are recommending both proposed dispensaries in Grantville be rejected.

No additional dispensary applicants have entered the city's approval pipeline.

The United Medical Marijuana Coalition, a group representing the city's legal dispensary operators, said they are still optimistic.

"Our group expects still more will eventually open, and that there will be enough dispensaries to serve patients even if we don't reach the maximum 36 allowable citywide," the group said in a joint statement.

They also reiterated requests that the city crack down on black market pot shops and illegal delivery services.

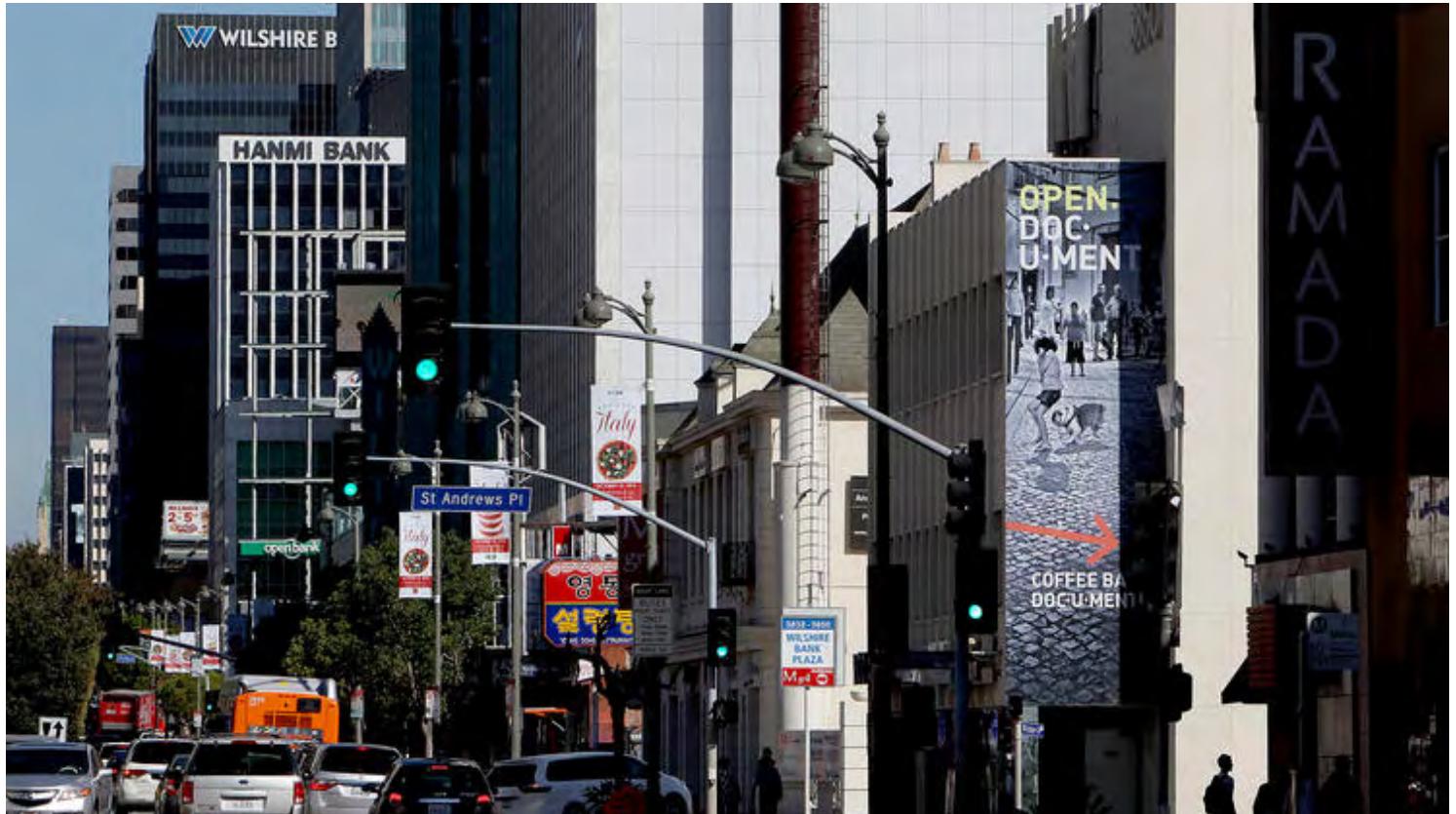
The legal dispensaries that have opened: 3703 Camino del Rio South in Mission Valley, 2335 Roll Drive in Otay Mesa, 3452 Hancock St. in the Midway District, 658 E. San Ysidro Blvd., 2405 Harbor Drive in Barrio Logan, 7128 Miramar Road in Mira Mesa, 5125 Convoy St. in Kearny Mesa and 10671 Roselle St. in Torrey Pines/Sorrento Valley.

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

L.A. County supervisors approve first stage of major Koreatown development



Supervisors' approval of a development with a community center marks a watershed moment in Koreatown activism, advocates say. (Luis Sinco / Los Angeles Times)

By **Abby Sewell and Victoria Kim**

AUGUST 9, 2016, 5:20 PM

L. A. County supervisors voted Tuesday to approve the first stage of a major planned development in Koreatown, including a community center for which neighborhood activists had lobbied heavily.

The so-called Vermont Corridor project will include three county-owned sites along South Vermont Avenue and will be built with a mix of public and private money.

The dilapidated headquarters of the county Department of Mental Health will be turned into a 172-unit residential complex. A new mental health headquarters will be built on a lot down the street, occupied now by an abandoned building and an office building for other county workers. A third site that houses offices for county parks and recreation staff will be turned into a 72-unit affordable-housing development for seniors, with a community center.

Plans to redevelop the county-owned sites on Vermont have been in the works for more than two years, but the community center is a relatively recent addition to the project.

Koreatown activists have long decried the lack of community gathering spaces in the neighborhood, which is by some measures the most densely populated in Los Angeles. They have been advocating for the inclusion of a community center in the planned Vermont Corridor development in public comments at supervisors' meetings and in talks with county staff.

On Tuesday, more than 100 residents and community members — many wearing T-shirts and carrying signs reading “Koreatown” — filed into the county meeting room to voice support for the proposed center, while some advocated for it to be increased in size.

“As a kid summer vacations meant hours in front of the TV, with no park or community centers to go to,” Scarlett De Leon, an organizer with Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance, told the supervisors. De Leon said her younger brother and sister are growing up the same way, while her grandmother also spends her days in a one-bedroom apartment.

“My grandma, my brother, my sister, like many, need a safe space in Koreatown,” she said.

Organizers said the plans for a community center, committed to in writing for the first time last week after months of lobbying, marked a watershed moment for Koreatown’s activism and empowerment.

In recent years, Koreatown has started voicing its demands as a united front, only to be met with one disappointment after another. The push for a much-needed park that started in 2009 fizzled to an end a couple years later. A redistricting fight in 2012 to get all of Koreatown in one council district ignited rancor and division and was ultimately unsuccessful.

The center, if constructed, would be a hard-won victory in an area with new developments cropping up left and right but scant community resources.

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” organizer Caroline Sim told supervisors. “Please include us in the process.”

Representatives of the YMCA, which opened its newest location in Koreatown in 2014, told supervisors Tuesday they were “bursting at the seams” with the pent-up demand in the neighborhood. The YMCA is expected to manage the new community center.

Supervisors approved an initial agreement with a development team Tuesday and \$10.5 million to be spent on pre-development work. Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who represents the area, pointed out that the community center is just one piece of the ambitious development plan.

“There will no longer be those blighted buildings essentially discouraging development on the part of the private sector,” he said. “There will no longer be these terrible facilities where our county employees have to work and

our constituents have to then seek services."

The county expects to spend about \$270 million to build the new mental health headquarters, but probably won't pay for the construction directly. Instead, a nonprofit set up for the project is expected to issue tax-exempt bonds to build it, which the county would pay back through lease payments on the building. The debt service will cost the county an estimated \$15.3 million a year.

The private developers on the project will be responsible for coming up with financing to build the housing and community center. They include Trammell Crow Co., which [also recently broke ground](#) on a major mixed-use project on county-owned land in downtown Los Angeles; and affordable housing developer Meta Housing Corp.

County Community Development Commission head Sean Rogan says the county expects to get about \$500,000 a year in income from the market-rate housing once it is completed.

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ALSO

[For LAPD cops, walking the Koreatown beat filled with mystery, confusion, cultural minefields](#)

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San Bernardino County Sun (<http://www.sbsun.com>)

How many businesses have left California? This report claims to have an answer

Report shows businesses leaving or curbing operations in California

By Kevin Smith, San Gabriel Valley Tribune

Tuesday, August 9, 2016



California's costly tax and regulatory policies prompted more than 10,000 businesses to leave the state, reduce their operations or curtail plans to locate here between 2008 and 2015, according to a report from [Spectrum Location Solutions](#).

The Irvine-based company conducts site-selection studies and other assessments to help businesses relocate to optimum states and locales for their operations. Some of their clients include corporations that have relocated out of California, like Honda.

Many companies that move away or reduce their operations aren't tracked

The report, "[California Business Departures: An Eight-Year Review 2008-2015](#)," reveals that at least 1,687 California disinvestment events occurred during that period, a count that reflects only those that became public knowledge.

And for every disinvestment that became known — either through media reports, company announcements or company reports to the U.S. Department of Labor, the Securities and Exchange Commission or the California Employment Development Department — another five occurred, the report said.

In preparing the Spectrum report, site selection consultants and economic development personnel from across the U.S. were asked this question:

For every company that leaves an area — any area, not just California — how many others make such a move without any media coverage or without having to file a report with the state or federal government?

Responses ranged from five to seven, with a few indicating that as many as 10 additional businesses made disinvestment moves for every one that was known. Spectrum ultimately relied on the most conservative estimate of five. With that multiplier in mind, the total number of businesses disinvestment actions in the Golden State exceeded 10,000.

The methodology behind 10,000

A variety of factors would appear to support the multiplier theory. Smaller companies often avoid issuing statements about such moves to avoid publicity. And companies that expand outside of California to serve new territories — actions that might appear unrelated to California's difficult business climate — often are not listed.

Another factor is the California Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act. That requires companies to file a furlough notice with the state Employment Development Department giving a 60-day notice if it employs 75 employees or more and lays off 50 or more during any 30-day period. But a review of the notices indicates the absence of companies with 74 employees and lower that are known through other sources to have closed completely or in part and left the state, the report said.

Several types of disinvestment events were tracked, with “relocation” accounting for the lion’s share.

Figures in the report show that 1,085 businesses moved all or part of their operations outside of California during the 2008-2015 period, with 498 of the moves shifting operations from California to another country through offshoring, outsourcing, relocation or expansion.

Other forms of disinvestment included businesses that closed a facility in California with work migrating to one or several out-of-state locations, capital directed elsewhere that in the

past would likely have stayed in California, work dispersed to other unknown areas outside of California, “U-turns” that occurred when a business was considering locating here but ultimately opted for an out-of-state location, and the cancelled construction or lease of a planned facility in California.

Local economist notes strong job growth in California

Economist Christopher Thornberg, a founding partner with [Beacon Economics](#), acknowledged that California’s isn’t the most business friendly state. But he said the state’s economy is still moving in a positive direction.

“Some companies do move out of California because of cost concerns,” he said. “Would I like to see those jobs stay here? Of course. But we still added more jobs than Florida and Texas put together. If you take a good hard look at things, our state is largely a success story.”

Figures from the state [Employment Development Department](#) show that California led the nation in year-over-year growth in June with 461,100 jobs added — outpacing Florida’s new 244,500 jobs and Texas, which added 171,100.

Texas is attracting high-paying California jobs

Spectrum President [Joe Vranich](#), who authored the report, isn’t impressed by that number. Texas, he said, still outperformed California over the past 15 to 20 years in overall employment growth. He added that the California jobs that have moved to Texas tend to pay higher wages than the Texas jobs that have migrated to California.

“Texas is outperforming California on so many metrics,” Vranich said.

Incentive programs help California businesses

It’s not all bad. The Spectrum report notes that California offers a variety of incentive programs to help businesses, many of which are administered through the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (Go-Biz). Those include tax incentives for aerospace companies, California Film Commission incentives, employment training panel incentives and California Energy Commission incentives.

Some of those incentives are hefty.

[Tesla](#), a Palo Alto-based makers of electric cars, received \$15 million in tax credits last year. And [Environmental Systems Research Institute Inc.](#), a Redlands-based international supplier of geographic information system (GIS) software, received \$2 million in tax credits.

Manufacturing is suffering the worst

But those incentives are still somewhat overshadowed by the businesses that have left California. The report shows that manufacturing firms accounted for the largest swath of businesses (562) that went looking for greener pastures, followed by pharmaceutical companies, makers of medical devices, biotech firms, health and dental businesses and veterinary businesses.

Other sectors that ranked high on the list included online retailers, e-commerce businesses, makers of communications equipment, and distribution, warehousing and logistics firms.

The report includes information on several businesses that either have moved their operations out of California or are planning to.

Kubota Tractor Corp. and Kubota Credit Corp., the company's financing arm, plan to move their headquarters from Torrance to Grapevine, Texas. A new facility in Grapevine is expected to be completed by early 2017. Kubota President and CEO Masato Yoshikawa indicated in the Spectrum report that the friendly business climate in Texas "is a big factor."

Yoshikawa said Kubota was focused more on getting closer to its major markets and customers. But the report notes that lower business and employee costs, taxes and regulations in Texas could well allow the company to cut its expenses by 20 to 35 percent. The move will affect about 180 employees at the Torrance headquarters.

H.J. Heinz Co. shuttered its Chatsworth condiment plant last year and moved those operations to Mason, Ohio, a move that resulted in the layoff of 145 workers.

RifleGear, a Fountain Valley company that sells a variety of firearms, moved its corporate headquarters in Plano, Texas this year and Walt Disney Parks and Resorts plans to transfer manufacturing of costumes for the company's theme park workers from Fullerton to Orlando, furloughing 85 employees in the process.

The report also reveals that California is considering imposing a broad set of taxes on businesses in 2016 and 2017, including higher fuel and motor vehicle taxes and a tax increase on business properties.

URL: <http://www.sbsun.com/business/20160809/how-many-businesses-have-left-california-this-report-claims-to-have-an-answer>

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LOCAL / L.A. Now

South El Monte mayor resigns after admitting he accepted bribes from a city contractor



Luis Aguinaga, 48, admitted that starting in 2005, he accepted at least \$45,000 in bribes, according to the U.S. attorney's office. (City of South El Monte)

By **Matt Hamilton**

AUGUST 9, 2016, 9:05 PM

The mayor of South El Monte stepped down from his post Tuesday, an unceremonious end to more than a decade of public service following the revelation last month that he regularly accepted bribes from a city contractor.

In a brief letter, Luis Aguinaga told administrators in the San Gabriel Valley city that his resignation took effect immediately.

"It has been a tremendous honor and privilege to have represented equally, residents and businesses in the community," Aguinaga wrote.

Aguinaga, 48, admitted last month that starting in 2005, he regularly accepted bribes of at least \$500, with cash payments left in a City Hall bathroom or in the passenger pocket of a car, according to the U.S. attorney's

office.

The long-running corruption scheme involved a contractor who provided construction and engineering services to the city. The contractor handed over the bundles of cash about twice a month until 2012, when the FBI caught Aguinaga accepting money in a South El Monte hotel bathroom.

If the contractor did not quickly hand over the cash after being paid by the city, Aguinaga would follow up, federal prosecutors said.

On some occasions, Aguinaga would accept larger sums, which he would split with an unidentified public official. Neither the contractor nor the other official were identified by federal prosecutors.

Since federal prosecutors announced Aguinaga's decision to enter a guilty plea to the corruption charge, residents and City Council members have [publicly called for his ouster](#) while also pledging to eliminate graft in the city of about 20,000 residents. Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Olmos said last week that elected leaders were working to restore the community's trust.

"If there's anyone who has had their hand on the cookie jar, believe me, they will be dealt with," Olmos said.

Councilman Joseph Gonzales said officials planned to review all contracts, most of which were approved without competitive bidding, and called for an inquiry by State Auditor [Elaine Howle](#).

The five-member [Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors](#) also adopted a motion Aug. 2 to formally ask Howle to conduct a "thorough investigation into improper governmental activities" in South El Monte, calling the city a "high risk local government agency." The motion was sought by Supervisor Hilda Solis, whose district includes South El Monte.

Aguinaga, who was elected in 2003 and also serves on the board of a [local water agency](#), is scheduled to appear in federal court on Wednesday for arraignment. The count to which he agreed to enter a guilty plea carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in federal prison.

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